COMMUNITY

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Historic Reunion of Wayne State's Latino/a Studies Program Alumni

EL CENTRAL HISPANIC NEWS

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HOLIDAY

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Holiday Greetings From EL CENTRAL Hispanic News!

Unidos a través del arte: el mural "Yo Soy porque Nosotros Somos" celebra la resiliencia de tres históricos barrios de Detroit

Por Amber Ogden

En una fría tarde de diciembre, los muros de un edificio olvidado de Detroit han cobrado vida con fotografías históricas que hablan del corazón de tres comunidades interconectadas con el mural Yo Soy porque Nosotros Somos, mientras las familias, amigos y transeúntes se reúnen para disfrutar de la inauguración.

La celebración con el 1800 y la calle 18th de fondo en el antiguo edificio APAC (ubicado directamente detrás de Michigan Central), se llenó de risas y recuerdos, mientras se bebía chocolate y la gente se calentaba junto al fuego con el espíritu de Ubuntu, la filosofía que nos recuerda que nuestra humanidad está ligada a los demás.

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United Through Art: 'I Am Because We Are' Mural Celebrates Resilience of Three Historic Detroit Neighborhoods

By Amber Ogden

On a chilly December afternoon, the walls of a once-forgotten building in Detroit came to life through photographic stories as families, friends, and passersby gathered to see the unveiling of I Am Because We Are, a mural that speaks to the heart of three interconnected communities.

Against the backdrop of 1800 18th Street, the former APAC building (located directly behind Michigan Central), the celebration echoed with laughter and shared memories as some sipped hot chocolate and warmed themselves by the fire while the spirit of Ubuntu. This philosophy reminds us that our humanity is tied to one another.

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Photo above left: More than 100 portraits were installed on the vacant building at 1800 18th St. in Mexicantown as an art installation called "I Am Because We Are". Photo credit Marcin Szczepanski. Above right: Neighborhood children enjoy roasting marshmallows at the celebration of the unveiling of the mural. Photo credit Freddy Torres.

The Trucks Keep Coming: Can $112 Million Relieve Southwest Detroit from Livernois Intermodal Facility Air Pollution?

By Isabelle Tavares for Planet Detroit

It's 8 am on a Thursday morning at Livernois and Federal St., just across from the Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal. About every two minutes, a freight truck thunders past a row of nearby residential homes.

At peak hours, trucks idle outside the facility, spewing exhaust as they unload and reload sun-bleached shipping containers full of automotive parts, consumer products, food and chemicals – goods that are then transported across Detroit, the country, and into Canada.

The terminal serves as a gateway for trade between Detroit and international markets – a critical link in the global supply chain. It's also a hard place to live for residents who have been exposed to the increasing pollution, noise, and dust caused by heavy truck traffic in their neighborhoods over decades.

Southwest Detroit residents have endured decades of pollution, noise and dust from freight trucks serving the Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal, going back to as early as 1938. Now, a $112 million federal infrastructure grant aims to modernize and decarbonize the facility, promising cleaner air, reduced truck traffic, and improved quality of life. While the project represents a significant investment in both the environment and the economy, some residents and advocates question whether these changes will sufficiently address long-standing community concerns or simply expand the terminal's capacity at their expense.

The Detroit RECHARGED project aims to modernize and decarbonize the facility, reducing truck traffic and air pollution. Electric and hybrid cranes will replace diesel, yards will be paved, and approximately 17,200 feet of new rail track will be laid.

The Livernois Intermodal Facility in Southwest Detroit plays a critical role in Michigan's freight network and has been in a state of disrepair for decades. Planet Detroit photo by Brayan Gutierrez

The project is a public-private partnership between the state, the city and rail freight company Norfolk Southern, which co-owns the facility with CSX Corporation. The U.S. Department of Transportation is contributing $67 million, with the remaining $45 million coming from the other partners.

Once completed at the end of 2027, the terminal will be one of the "most technologically advanced intermodal facilities in the country," said Katie Byrd, Norfolk Southern's assistant director of executive communications.

The project is part of the broader MDOT-led effort to reduce the environmental impacts of freight, according to a project report. Norfolk Southern pledged $1 million as part of a grant to the nonprofit community group Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision to help with community outreach, workforce development and small business enterprise engagement "to ensure the community directly benefits from this project as it is built and afterwards," Byrd added.

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Happy Holidays!!!!

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United Through Art

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The I Am Because We Are mural is a testament to the resilience, diversity, and deep connection that define the Corktown, North Corktown, and Hubbard Richard neighborhoods. Inspired by the African philosophy of Ubuntu, which emphasizes humanity's interconnectedness with the phrase "I am because we are," the mural celebrates the shared strength and unity of these Detroit communities.

Designed by local artists Jessica Trevino and Romain Blanquart, the I Am Because We Are mural transforms the former APAC building into a striking tribute to the community. Spanning two sides of the giant structure with vibrant 10 x 23-foot banners, the artwork features 104 portraits of residents whose lives and stories capture the resilience and unity of Corktown, North Corktown, and Hubbard Richard. The installation, completed last week, set the stage for Saturday's celebration, where neighbors gathered to honor their shared history and collective future in a moment of pride and connection.

"Part of this project is to say let's celebrate the residents who have been here for generations, who are actually welcoming these changes. That can be a bit weary sometimes because change is scary," Blanquart said.

"And so what do we do? We just want to make sure that people understand that nothing that you see here, that's happening today and whether that's being highlighted, would have been possible without long-time residents."

Some familiar faces are on the walls, like Amelia Duran and son Gabe of Garage Cultural, and some are being introduced, like long-time residents of Corktown Mario Muscat. A disabled veteran, Muscat highlighted that he could not have imagined being a part of something like this but is glad he is because it's helping him and his family be connected to the 'new Corktown.'

"I used to know every single house, everybody in Corktown. When we were kids, we ran around the neighborhood and knew our neighbors," Muscat said.

"Now that newer people are coming in, we are starting to get to know them. I see they're starting to come out to say hi to the old-time residents, and that's what makes this mural important."

For the past year, the mural has been created collaboratively. The lead artists worked alongside two young interns, Julianna Izzard of Corktown and Lamar Dupree of Hubbard Richard, who received a grant from the Cultural Crossroads of Michigan among others.

The project also provided paid opportunities through the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan for the interns to hone their artistic skills while actively contributing to a piece that celebrates their community. Their involvement highlights a commitment to empowering the next generation as caretakers of the neighborhood's rich history and culture, ensuring its legacy thrives.

"What you see on the wall is a combination of multi-generational families and people who might have moved into the neighborhood in the last year, and so it was very important to be all-inclusive," Blanquart said.

Artists Trevino and Blanquart describe I Am Because We Are as a heartfelt love letter to the neighborhoods they hold dear. Trevino, whose family has called Hubbard Richard home since 1962, has witnessed Detroit's evolution through decades of continued change.

Blanquart, a French native who moved to Detroit in 2002, brings an outsider's perspective shaped by two decades of immersion in the city's culture. Their collaboration embodies the message of the mural: unity, diversity, and the power of community.

The title, I Am Because We Are, captures the ethos of Corktown, North Corktown, and Hubbard Richard, where stories of interconnectedness have been woven together over generations. These neighborhoods have faced challenges but have always risen with a shared sense of purpose and solidarity.

"The Ubuntu philosophy of Sub-Saharan Africa says that my existence and my well-being are only reflections of your well-being, and what I put into you will come to me," Blanquart said.

"So, if I prosper, you prosper, we will all prosper. And so, we are interconnected, and if you take that at heart, really, that's what makes a community function properly. It's recognizing that we are all operating as human beings."

The installation arrives at a pivotal moment for the area, with the recent full restoration and reopening of Michigan Central Station and developments continuously being added such as the Joe Louis Greenway. While these changes can be deemed scary, with gentrification taking place, the changes also signal hope and opportunity, they also spark concerns about preserving the original identities of the neighborhoods.

I Am Because We Are stands as a tribute to the people who have shaped Corktown, North Corktown, and Hubbard Richard, reminding the community of its rich history and the need to honor its roots while embracing new residents and opportunities.

The mural will remain on display for several months. Bedrock owns the building and there are currently no announced plans for it.

"We can only truly be 'If I am, If you are, We are,'" Blanquart said.

"We wanted to get that message across and also just bring people together because even within the community, sometimes you realize not everybody knows each other. This is just another occasion to say, let's talk to each other. Let's engage in conversation."

Amber Ogden is a freelance writer born and raised in Detroit. She has published work in Forbes, Chevy in the D, Model D, and Rachel Ray Every Day. She enjoys art, culture, and eating her way through the city in her free time.

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This story was made possible by the Race and Justice Reporting Initiative, which aims to build trust between the news media and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities and strengthen representative democracy. Funding for the initiative has been provided by a generous grant from Press Forward.

Unidos a través del arte

Con't de pg. 1

El mural Yo Soy porque Nosotros Somos, es un testimonio de resiliencia, diversidad y profunda conexión entre los barrios de Corktown, North Corktown y Hubbard Richard; inspirado en la filosofía africana de Ubuntu, que enfatiza la interconexión de la humanidad con la frase "Yo Soy porque Nosotros Somos", celebrando la fuerza compartida y la unidad de estas comunidades en Detroit.

Diseñado por los artistas locales Jessica Trevino y Romain Blanquart, el mural "Yo soy porque nosotros somos" transforma el antiguo edificio de APAC en un llamativo homenaje a la comunidad. La obra de arte, que abarca dos lados de la gigantesca estructura, con vibrantes pancartas de 3 x 7 metros, presenta 104 retratos de residentes, cuya vida e historia captura la resiliencia y la unidad de Corktown, North Corktown y Hubbard Richard. La instalación se llevó a cabo la semana pasada y preparó el escenario para la celebración del sábado, donde los vecinos se reunieron para honrar su historia y su futuro colectivo en un momento de orgullo y conexión.

"Parte de este proyecto es para decir que honremos a los residentes que han estado aquí durante generaciones y que realmente están dándole la bienvenida a los cambios, lo que puede resultar un poco agotador, porque el cambio nos da miedo", dijo Blanquart.

"Entonces, ¿qué estamos haciendo? Solo queremos que la gente entienda que nada de lo que está sucediendo, hubiera sido posible sin los residentes que han estado aquí a lo largo del tiempo".

Algunas caras conocidas están en los muros, como Amelia Duran y su hijo Gabe del Garage Cultural, y algunas están siendo presentadas, como Mario Muscat, residente de Corktown, que es un veterano discapacitado que destacó que nunca se hubiera imaginado ser parte de algo como esto, pero está contento de serlo porque lo está ayudando a él y a su familia a conectarse con el "nuevo Corktown".

"Conocía todas las casas y a todos los de Corktown. Cuando éramos pequeños, corríamos por el vecindario y conocíamos a nuestros vecinos", dijo Muscat.

"Ahora que ha llegado gente nueva, estamos empezando a conocerlos. Veo que están empezando a salir a saludar a los que tenemos mucho tiempo viviendo aquí, y eso es lo que hace que este mural sea importante".

El año pasado se hizo el mural colectivamente. Los artistas trabajaron junto a dos jóvenes pasantes, Julianna Izzard de Corktown y Lamar Dupree de Hubbard Richard, recibiendo un financiamiento de Cultural Crossroads of Michigan y otras organizaciones.

El proyecto les ofreció una pasantía pagada a través de la Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan para que perfeccionaran sus habilidades artísticas mientras contribuían activamente en una pieza que celebra su comunidad. Su participación destaca el compromiso de empoderar a la próxima generación como cuidadores de la rica historia y cultura del vecindario, asegurando que su legado prospere.

"Lo que se ve en los muros es una combinación de familias multigeneracionales y personas que podrían haberse mudado al vecindario recientemente, por lo que era muy importante ser inclusivos", dijo Blanquart.

Los artistas Trevino y Blanquart describen Yo Soy porque Nosotros Somos, como una carta de amor a las comunidades que aprecian. Trevino, cuya familia ha llamado a Hubbard Richard su hogar desde 1962, ha sido testigo de la evolución de Detroit a través de décadas de cambio.

Blanquart, un francés que se mudó a Detroit en 2002, aporta la perspectiva de un inmigrante, formado por dos décadas de inmersión en la cultura en la ciudad. Su colaboración encarna el mensaje del mural: unidad, diversidad y el poder de la comunidad.

El título, Yo Soy porque Nosotros Somos, captura el espíritu de Corktown, North Corktown y Hubbard Richard, donde las historias de interconexión se han tejido por generaciones, han enfrentado desafíos, pero siempre han resurgido con solidaridad.

"La filosofía Ubuntu del África subsahariana dice que mi existencia y mi bienestar son solo reflejos de tu bienestar, y lo que yo ponga en ti vendrá a mí", comentó Blanquart.

"Por lo tanto, si yo prospero, tú prosperas, todos prosperaremos. Ya que estamos interconectados, y si tomas eso en serio, realmente, eso es lo que hace que una comunidad funcione correctamente. Es reconocer que todos estamos unidos como seres humanos".

La instalación llega en un momento decisivo del área, con la completa restauración y reapertura de la estación central de Michigan y el continuo desarrollo que se avecina, como el Joe Louis Greenway. Si bien estos cambios pueden parecer aterradores, con la gentrificación en curso, son una señal de esperanza y oportunidad, pero que genera inquietud sobre la preservación de la identidade original de los vecindarios.

Yo Soy porque Nosotros Somos, es un homenaje a las personas que han dado forma a Corktown, North Corktown y Hubbard Richard, recordando a la comunidad, su rica historia y la necesidad de honrar sus raíces mientras acoge a nuevos residentes y oportunidades.

El mural permanecerá en exhibición durante varios meses, Bedrock es propietaria del edificio y actualmente no hay planes anunciados para él.

"Solo podemos ser verdaderamente 'Si yo soy, si tú eres, nosotros somos'", dijo Blanquart.

"Queríamos transmitir ese mensaje y también unir a la gente porque, incluso dentro de la comunidad, a veces te das cuenta de que no todo el mundo se conoce. Esta es otra ocasión para decir: hablemos y conversemos".

Amber Ogden es una escritora independiente nacida y criada en Detroit. Ha publicado trabajos en Forbes, Chevy in the D, Model D y Rachel Ray Every Day. Disfruta del arte, la cultura y de recorrer la ciudad en su tiempo libre.

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Esta historia fue posible gracias a la Race and Justice Reporting Initiative, que tiene como objetivo generar confianza entre los medios de comunicación y las comunidades negras, indígenas y de color y fortalecer la democracia representativa. La financiación de la iniciativa ha sido proporcionada por una generosa subvención de Press.

Traducción Carmen Elena Luna

Photos provided by Freddy Torres

Historic Reunion of Wayne State's Latino/a Studies Program Alumni Signals Support and Enthusiasm for the Future

By Melissa Miranda-Morse
Photos by: Brayan Gutierrez

Donned in festive holiday attire, alumni of the Center for Latino/a and Latin American Studies (CLLAS) came together in a historic multi-generational celebration on Thursday, December 12 at a packed La Noria Restaurant in Southwest Detroit.

For the first time ever, alumni spanning the Center's 53-year history came together to share experiences and express their support for the Center and its decades of service to the community. During the gathering, alumni heard from Center faculty and staff on current initiatives and ways to get involved.

Among the alumni attendees were members of the founding generation in 1971 that united with professors and community activists to establish Latino En Marcha (LEM), a one-year leadership training program for Detroit youth. LEM was so successful that the following year, 1972, the Wayne State University Board of Governors approved its establishment as a full university program under the name Chicano-Boricua Studies (CBS). It was one of the first programs in the U.S. dedicated to the study of Latino/as with origins from Mexico and Puerto Rico.

CBS became CLLAS in 2011, reflecting the continuous growth in the diversity among Latino/as within the community and the breadth of the program's curriculum. Despite the name changes, the Center has remained faithful to its original goals, which include helping to recruit, retain and graduate students at Wayne State, developing leaders for service to their community and educating on the U.S. Latino/a experience.

Many of the LEM/CBS/CLLAS alumni since the 1970s have become agents of change in their communities. The first generation of alumni established most of the social service agencies that continue to serve the diverse population of Southwest Detroit and its surrounding communities today.

Now numbering more than 2,500, the Center's alumni have gone on to serve locally and nationally in the areas of education, social services, government, the arts, science and business, including entrepreneurship.

Group shot of the more than 60 CLLAS alumni and friends at the reunion

Plans are underway to form an alumni association in 2025 that will support CLLAS and other organizations that serve the community. The next alumni gathering will take place on Wayne State's campus at the Center's annual Academia del Pueblo research conference, which is free and open to the public, on April 11, 2025. For more information, visit www.las.wayne.edu.

The celebration was sponsored by LA SED, Inc. and Dr. José Cuello. It was hosted by Friends of CBS, with the planning committee consisting of Belda Garza, Elena Herrada, Alicia Diaz, Mary Carmen Muñoz, Dr. José Cuello, Rocio Oxholm, Pamela Esparza, Andrew Taszreak and Melissa Miranda-Morse.

Calling all 2,500+ alumni:

If you participated in Latino en Marcha, Chicano-Boricua Studies, or Center for Latino/a and Latin American Studies, we want to hear from you! Email Pamela at gh1513@wayne.edu with your name, contact information and years that you participated, or you can call the Center's main office at 313-577-4378. We will add you to our list to get important updates from the program and opportunities to get involved to support current students

From L to R: Alumni Osvaldo "Ozzie" Rivera, Lydia Chouinard, Dulce Checkler, Alicia Díaz, Vanessa Reynolds, Renee Zenteno Díaz and Maria Khan

From L to R: Melissa Miranda-Morse of CLLAS holding Charlize, daughter of alumna Lydia Chouinard; alumnae and planning committee members Rocio Oxholm and Elena Herrada; Director Dr. Jorge L. Chinea; and event sponsors Mary Carmen Muñoz of LA SED and Dr. José Cuello

United Through Art

Photos provided by I Am Because We Are

(L-R) Romain Blanquart and Jessica Trevino are the artists behind the Photographic Mural Installation titled "I Am Because We Are" both Hubbard Richard residents

Mario Muscat of Corktown

The Trucks Keep Coming

Con't from pg. 1

The yard has been jointly operated since 1998 by Norfolk Southern and CSX Corporation. Norfolk Southern owns 67.5 acres on the east side of the train tracks, while CSX owns about 50 acres on the west side.

CSX does not plan to upgrade their equipment, though work to pave their portion of the yard has already started and is expected to be completed sometime next year, said Sam Krassenstein, chief of infrastructure for the city of Detroit.

Traffic flow near the CSX entrance at the intersection of Vernor Hwy, Dix St, and Waterman St, will improve under the Safe Streets grant. It will be designed next year and constructed in 2026 or the following year.

The city is also improving Livernois Ave as part of the Safe Streets grant in 2026 between Interstate-94 and I-75.

Project boosters say the improvements will benefit the economy and the environment. For longtime Southwest Detroit resident Amanda Holiday, relief can't come soon enough. She said dust gets in her family's airways, causing her kids to have frequent ear infections.

"I have to take Zyrtec or Claritin or some kind of antihistamines every day, like every single day, and so do my young children," she said. "I'm most excited about the paving of the yard, because the biggest thing we see as residents is the dust," she said.

While proponents are hopeful that the investment will create jobs and improve local infrastructure, some residents and environmental advocates remain skeptical.

Livernois resident Thomasenia Weston has been impacted by incessant truck traffic for years, with the foundation of her home crumbling from the vibrations. While the project has different components on different timelines, significant improvements will be made in the next two to three years. The longer-term rail crossing work to separate Central St and Lonyo St is still about five years away from securing federal funding and construction, Krassenstein said.

"Two years is too long to wait. That's an unreasonable ask of a community that's already suffering to wait," she said. "How will it further impact everything else that's going on with the particulate matter? I'm asthmatic, and it seems like every couple of months it just grows."

Andrew Bashi, staff attorney at Great Lakes Environmental Law Center, said he doubts that the project will actually keep trucks off residential streets and reduce pollution.

He said while he sees the value and benefit of electric cranes, he thinks those efficiency improvements could "pale in comparison" to the potential impacts of increasing the facility's capacity. The project will increase capacity from to 250,000 containers annually, from 107,000.

But Geoff Lewis, climate and energy research area specialist lead and adjunct lecturer at the University of Michigan, said that rail is a quarter as energy-intensive as trucking and has a higher vehicle capacity, though trucks are necessary for reaching most final destinations.

Noise pollution from trucks will still be an issue, Lewis said, though he thinks the paving of the yard will reduce dust and particulate matter.

Kristy Allen, project manager for air monitor company JustAir, said improvements like reducing diesel idling and yard paving can lower fine particulate matter, which is linked to heart and lung issues, premature death, and mental health problems. Particulate matter is 30 times smaller than the width of a human hair and can enter the bloodstream when inhaled.

In May, JustAir installed an air monitor on John Kronk St., which recorded an average PM 2.5 (particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 microns or less) concentration of 14 micrograms per cubic centimeter over six months—classified as "moderate" by the EPA. JustAir plans to add monitors on the east and south sides of the facility and encourages residents to track air quality using the JustAir app at www.justair.app/

Krassenstein wants people to see "how much of a win" the project is for Southwest Detroit. His involvement in the project dates back six years, he said.

"We've been stuck with this facility in a state of disrepair, dirt and noise for the last two plus decades," Krassenstein said.

Terminal upgrades are expected to cut truck idling, gate queueing, and emissions. Improved layout and increased storage capacity will enhance efficiency, enabling higher, narrower container stacking and reducing off-site storage needs, Krassenstein said.

From Monday to Friday, an average 436 trucks access the yard entrance at the intersection of Livernois Ave and Federal St. The majority come from northbound Livernois Ave after cutting through a dense residential neighborhood between the terminal and I-75, where Weston and Holiday live.

The improvements include a mandated left turn from the facility onto Livernois Ave, shunting exiting truck traffic away from residential streets toward I-94.

Today, each truck spends about 45 minutes in the facility. During peak hours, from 11 am to 2 pm, residents note trucks lining up outside of the facility entrance on Livernois Avenue.

Byrd said a Norfolk Southern contractor plans to implement and operate an appointment system, among other technology improvements, to eliminate backups onto residential streets.

With the increased storage capacity at the facility, fewer containers will need to be moved off-site, reducing short-haul traffic and the associated emissions from diesel trucks making repetitive short trips through residential streets, Krassenstein said.

As a result of fewer freight trucks making repetitive trips and reduced vehicle miles traveled, Zachary Kolodin, chief infrastructure officer of the Michigan Department of Transportation estimates 645,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide over a 20-year period will be avoided. This is equivalent to greenhouse gas emissions from 150,450 gasoline powered cars driven for one year, or greenhouse gas emissions avoided by 193 wind turbines running for one year.

Krassenstein emphasized that the increased capacity will enable the processing of more trains and rail cars, which he said could attract more business to rail over trucking and result in a net positive environmental impact.

"The more medium-and long-haul truck routes we can take off the road, the better for emissions," he said, though he acknowledged that immediate changes to demand are unlikely.

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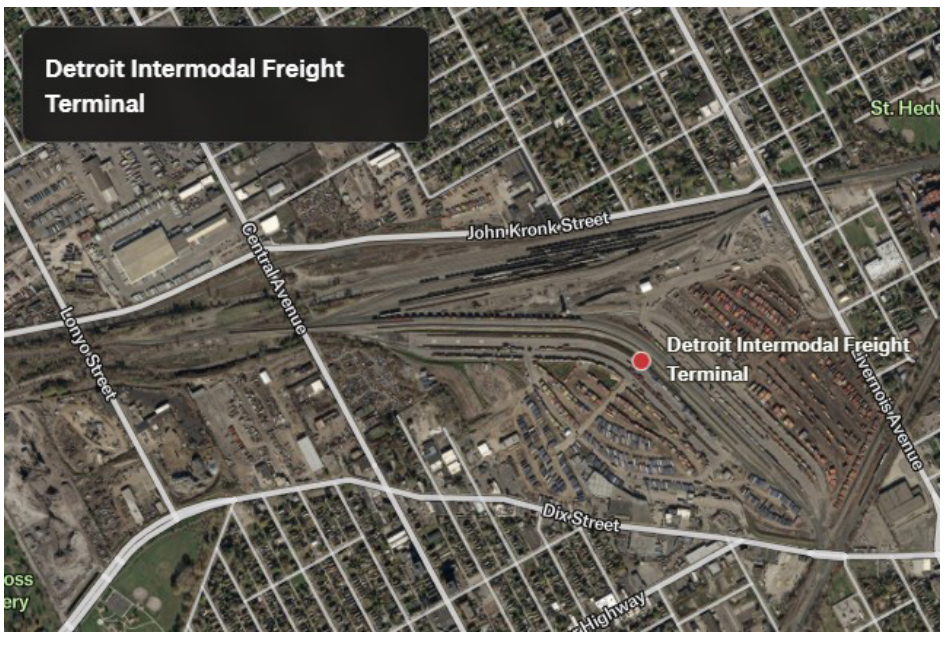
Isabelle Tavares covers environmental and public health impacts in Southwest Detroit for Planet Detroit with Report for America. Working in text, film and audio, she is a Dominican-American storyteller who is concerned with identity, generational time, and ecology.

Editor's Note: Access to all the links in the article can be found on the EL CENTRAL website at www.elcentralmedia.com.

Amanda Holiday, Early Childhood Program Director, at the Congress of Communities office in Southwest Detroit on December 11, 2024. Planet Detroit photo by Brayan Gutierrez

Thomasenia Weston had her front steps in Southwest Detroit overlaid in 2016 and suspects that the regular vibration from trucks driving by has cracked them again. Planet Detroit photo by Nick Hagen.

The Livernois Intermodal Facility in Southwest Detroit plays a critical role in Michigan's freight network. It is among the sites poised to benefit from over $67 million in federal funding secured by the Michigan Department of Transportation for statewide infrastructure improvements. Planet Detroit photo by Brayan Gutierrez



Map of where the Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal is located

Southwest Detroit Holiday Fest: A Celebration with a Twist

By Georgina García

Every year, the vibrant Mexicantown-Hubbard Richard Neighborhood gets dressed up for the holidays and welcomes everyone to its annual Southwest Holiday Fest.

Local organizations and residents come together to offer a variety of activities that are full of flavor, color, music, and happiness. These activities range from a theater puppet show to a traditional Posada procession, and children are encouraged to visit "Pancho Claus."

The Southwest Detroit Holiday Fest is an annual celebration that brings families and neighbors together to experience the joy and traditions of the holiday season along the Bagley St. and W. Vernor Hwy. corridor, specifically between 16th and 24th streets.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Southwest Detroit Holiday Fest, which is made possible through the generous support of several groups and organizations, including the Matrix Theatre Company, Mexicantown Community Development Corporation, Plaza del Sol, the Hubbard Richard Residents Association at the Gazebo, Roberto Clemente Recreation Center, We the People. and Corpus Art.

Southwest Detroit Holiday Fest: Una Celebración con un toque diferente.

Por Georgina García

Cada año, el vibrante vecindario de Mexicantown-Hubbard Richard se viste de gala para las fiestas y da la bienvenida a todas y todas a su festival anual.

Las organizaciones locales y los residentes de esta zona se unen para ofrecer actividades diversas llenas de sabor, color, música y alegría. Estas actividades van desde un show de marionetas en el teatro hasta una tradicional procesión de posadas, y se anima a los niños a visitar a "Pancho Claus".

El Southwest Detroit Holiday Fest es una celebración anual que reúne a familias y vecinos para disfrutar de la alegría y las tradiciones de la temporada navideña a lo largo del corredor de Bagley St. y W. Vernor Hwy., específicamente entre las calles 16 y 24.

Este año se celebra el décimo aniversario del Southwest Detroit Holiday Fest. La celebración del 2024 ha sido posible gracias al apoyo de varios grupos y organizaciones, entre ellos Matrix Theatre Company, Mexicantown Community Development Corporation, Plaza del Sol, Hubbard Richard Residents Association en el Gazebo, Roberto Clemente Recreation Center, We the People y Corpus Art.

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Wishing you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year

From EL CENTRAL Hispanic News!

Photo by Alejandro Ugalde Sandoval

2024 has been another eventful year for the team at EL CENTRAL Hispanic News! This past year we brought home more recognition for our work in the form of five awards at the annual conference of the National Association of Hispanic Publications (NAHP). In addition, We've expanded our print distribution area across the Detroit Metro Area into the downriver and northern suburbs.

Plus, we've ventured into a new media platform with WDET with the launch of our Spanish radio programming called Voz Latina! Look for our notices in print and on our website for information about online streaming schedules with content in Spanish from our weekly edition and other sources.

We take pride in bringing our readers the "most original" and "most local" stories for and about the Hispanic/Latino community and residents of Southwest Detroit and the metro area. Our contributors are from the community, so they know our community – which is what differentiates us from our peers.

Our team took the opportunity to gather last week for a holiday dinner at Armando's Mexican Restaurant where we enjoyed each other's stories as well as savory Caribbean dishes prepared by the staff at Armando's! And everyone walked away with a new appreciation for the diversity and wealth of experience that our team brings to our work in sharing with our readers and followers trusted information and features each week.

The roster of EL CENTRAL team members and writers who contributed stories about our community this past year appears at the right. We all hope you continue to enjoy and benefit from the information we have shared with you. It is our commitment to bring even more local stories and resources to you in 2025.

Best wishes for a very blessed holiday season and a prosperous new year!

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Le deseamos a usted y su familia una Feliz Navidad y un próspero Año Nuevo

¡De parte de EL CENTRAL Hispanic News!

¡El 2024 ha sido otro año lleno de muchos acontecimientos para el equipo de EL CENTRAL Hispanic News! Este año hemos traído a casa más reconocimiento por nuestro trabajo, con cinco premios en la conferencia anual de la Asociación Nacional de Publicaciones Hispanas (NAHP), además, hemos ampliado nuestra área de distribución impresa en el área metropolitana de Detroit hasta los suburbios del norte y al sur de downriver.

Además, nos hemos aventurado en una nueva plataforma de medios con WDET con el lanzamiento de nuestra programación de radio en español llamada Voz Latina. Busque nuestros avisos impresos y en nuestro sitio web para obtener información sobre los horarios de transmisión en línea con contenido en español de nuestra edición semanal.

Nos enorgullecemos de brindarles a nuestros lectores las historias "más originales" y "más locales" para y sobre la comunidad hispana/latina y los residentes del suroeste de Detroit y el área metropolitana. Nuestros colaboradores son de la comunidad, por lo que la conocen, que es lo que nos diferencia de nuestros pares. Nuestro equipo aprovechó la oportunidad de reunirse la semana pasada para una cena navideña en el restaurante mexicano Armando's, donde disfrutamos de las historias de los demás y de los sabrosos platos caribeños preparados por el personal de Armando's. Y todos nos fuimos con una nueva apreciación por la diversidad y la riqueza de la experiencia que nuestro equipo aporta a nuestro trabajo al compartir con nuestros lectores y seguidores información y artículos confiables cada semana.

A continuación, se muestra la lista de los miembros del equipo de EL CENTRAL y los escritores que contribuyeron con historias sobre nuestra comunidad el año pasado. Todos esperamos que continúe disfrutando y beneficiándose de la información que hemos compartido con usted. Es nuestro compromiso brindarle aún más historias y recursos locales en 2025.

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Lions - 42
Bills - 48

EL CENTRAL
HISPANIC NEWS
SPORTS

Sports Editor: Dan Graschuck/ EL CENTRAL

Photos provided by Detroit Lions

The Detroit Lions hosted the Buffalo Bills, last Sunday afternoon, at Ford Field.

With the Detroit Lions defense being thinned out by injuries, the Lions could not stop the Bills.

The Detroit Lions lost to the Bills, 42 - 48.

The Detroit Lions have 3 games left in the regular season, and if they can win out, they will claim first place in the NFC North Division and the NFC Conference and will have a first round BYE, before hosting at Ford Field the following two games (the second round of the playoffs, and if they win that one, the NFC Championship game).

The Lions remaining schedule is traveling to take on the Chicago Bears, on Sunday, December 22nd, at 1:00 pm (FOX), at San Francisco 49ers (for a NFC Championship game rematch), on Monday Night Football, December 30th, at 8:15 pm (ESPN/ABC), before returning back to Ford Field to host the Minnesota Vikings (Date/time/ TV are TBD).

The Detroit Lions are still currently #1 in the NFC North Division and NFC Conference.

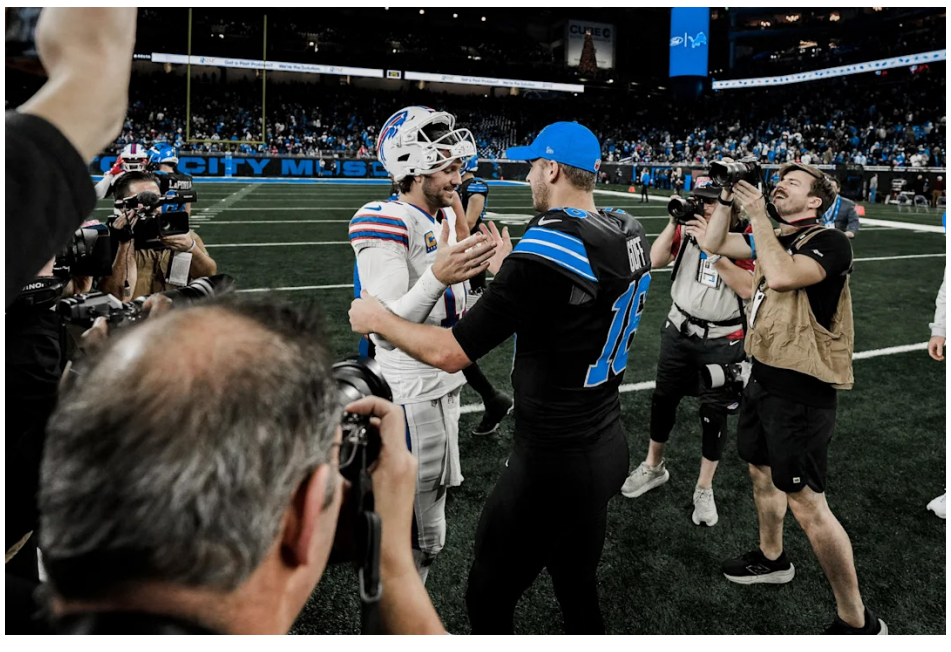
Photos below are highlights from the Detroit Lions and Buffalo Bills game

Lions TE #87 Sam LaPorta catches a pass from Jared Goff. LaPorta had 7 receptions for 111 yards

Lions DL #54 Alim McNeill gets ready against the Bills. McNeill was injured against the Bills and will be projected to not return to action this season

Lions RB #5 David Montgomery making a play against the Bills. Montgomery got injured during the game and will be out the remainder of the season. Montgomery had 5 carries for 4 yards and 4 receptions for 31 yards

Lions WR #17 Tim Patrick dives over a Bills player to score a TD. Patrick had 4 receptions for 30 yards with 1 TD



Lions QB #16 Jared Goff and Bills QB #17 Josh Allen shake hands after the game. Goff was 38 for 59 for 494 yard with 5 TDs. Allen was 23 for 34 for 362 yards with 2 TDs, 11 carries for 68 yards and 2 TDs

Lions WR #9 Jameson Williams catches a TD pass from Jared Goff late in the game. Williams had 3 receptions for 37 yards with 1 TD

More Moves By Detroit City

EL CENTRAL HISPANIC NEWS
Pateando la No. 5
SPORTS

David Levine
EL CENTRAL

While there hasn't been an official announcement from Detroit City FC, Le Rouge all but confirmed the retirement of club legend Nate Steinwascher last week. The final clue came when the team announced the signing of former Monterey Bay goalie Carlos Herrera. The twenty-seven year old made 34 starts for his now former club over the last three years, recording 114 saves. Herrera comes in to compete with Carlos Saldana for the number one job.

Saldana had an excellent first season in Detroit, making 33 saves and posting 5 shutouts. Prior to joining DCFC, Saldana spent seven years in the Chivas system without making a first team appearance. He then moved on to Sacramento before joining Detroit City. Herrera, from San Leandro, California, has worked his way up the US soccer pyramid with stops in college and the NPSL before joining Monterey Bay. The two will give DCFC a solid tandem for the next two years.

In addition to Herrera's signing, the club announced the departure of forward Yazeed Mathews and defender Brett Levis. Mathews, from South Africa, was a fan favorite whose final goal for the club was a dramatic equalizer in the US Open Cup against the Houston Dynamo of MLS. Levis came in a trade and filled in at left back and left midfield. With the departure of Mathews and Levis, DCFC has quite a few open spots on the roster. Trevor James and Danny Dichio have a lot of work to do to fill out the squad and find more support for Ben Morris in attack.

USL EXPANDS LEAGUE CUP TO INCLUDE THE CHAMPIONSHIP

In 2024, the USL introduced the Jagermeister League Cup, with the famous potent potable as the tournament sponsor. As a trial, only the twelve clubs in League One participated. The teams were divided into groups and played a World Cup style tournament concurrently with the regular season.

For 2025, the Jagermeister Cup will include all 24 teams from the Championship and 14 from League One. The teams have been divided into regionally based six or seven team groups. Detroit City is in group 4 with Hartford Athletic, the Pittsburgh Riverhounds, Rhode Island FC, Portland Hearts of Pine (League One), and Westchester SC (League One). Each team will play four group games, two at home and two away. The group winners and two wild cards will advance to the quarterfinals which will be single elimination matches.

The first group games are targeted for April 26 with the final on the weekend of July 26. In addition to 34 league matches, each USL Championship team is now guaranteed at least the four group games in the Jagermeister League Cup and one US Open Cup game. Additional games mean the clubs will have to have sufficient roster depth to cover for potential injuries or suspensions. It will also be another shot at a trophy, something players, fans, and clubs will relish.

FIFA WORLD CLUB CUP COMING TO THE USA

The USL isn't the only organization adding games to an already crowded schedule. FIFA has decided to have a 32 team Club World Cup in the United States next summer. The places were allocated to the various continental confederations much like the actual World Cup. Europe will have twelve teams with South America, Africa, Asia, CONCACAF, and Oceania filling out the rest of the places.

The games will be played mostly east of the Mississippi for two reasons: 1) the locations are closer to Europe and 2) the CONCACAF Gold Cup will be going on at exactly the same time out west. FIFA has decided that clubs will not be obligated to release players for international games at this time. This means that the USA, Mexico, and Canada could be without a few top players.

The clubs qualified by either winning titles such as the UEFA Champions League or the Copa Libertadores or having one of the strongest co-efficients in the FIFA ranking system during the last four years. FIFA President Gianni Infantino held the final place until the very end before announcing that Inter Miami would play. Other than winning the MLS Supporters Shield in 2024, the club's only reason for inclusion is the presence of Lionel Messi. Normally, the MLS Cup champion Los Angeles Galaxy would have earned the right to play, but this is FIFA.

Messi and his team will open the tournament on June 14 in the Hard Rock Stadium in Miami against Al Ahly FC of Egypt. The other US representative is the Seattle Sounders, who actually won the CONCACAF Champions League in 2023. They will host all three of their group matches in Lumen Field, also a 2026 World Cup venue. They will welcome Botofogo, Atletico de Madrid, and Paris St. Germain to the Pacific Northwest in a grueling set of games.

Club Leon, Monterrey, and Pachuca will represent Mexico. The three clubs won the other CONCACAF Champions League trophies during the four-year period FIFA considered for this Club World Cup. Leon's group has Chelsea, Flamengo, and Esperence of Tunisia. Monterrey faces Internazionale de Milan, River Plate, and Urawa Red Diamonds of Japan. Pachuca will meet Real Madrid, FC Salzburg, and Al Hilal of Saudi Arabia. These games are going to be tough. The US and Mexican clubs will face a variety of opponents, many for the first time ever.

Because the venues are mostly in the eastern half of the United States, there are games a day's drive or less from Detroit. Cincinnati will be hosting four group games, featuring either Bayern Munich or Borussia Dortmund of the Bundesliga in three and Pachuca in the fourth. Nashville, Philadelphia, and Atlanta are also within driving range and will host a variety of group matches. Philadelphia alone will have six group matches followed by a round of sixteen game and a quarterfinal.

While it sounds great to hear about all these famous clubs playing competitive games nearby, it remains to be seen what FIFA will charge for tickets. Having failed to land a major television deal, FIFA will have to find a way to make some money. They promised major payouts to the clubs for playing in this tournament, so they will have to recoup some of that. The most likely way is to charge high ticket prices. Given the domestic season (MLS and the USL) will be underway and the Gold Cup is also slated for next summer, FIFA can't really afford to price people out of their tournament unless they want empty stadiums. It's hard to see people paying hundreds of dollars to watch Auckland City against Benfica in Orlando, for example. Tickets go on sale this week. If the clubs are persuaded to play their best players and commit to winning the tournament, it has the chance to be the perfect warmup for the World Cup in 2026. It could also contribute to over-saturation of the market and be a major financial drain for the fans.

GAMEABOVE SPORTS Bowl At Ford Field !!!

The NCAA Bowl games have been announced. The Pittsburgh Panthers and Toledo Rockets will play at Ford Field, for the GAMEABOVE SPORTS Bowl, on Thursday, December 26th, at 2:00 pm, (ESPN). For tickets, please visit www.gameabovesportsbowl.com, tickets start at $29.

The University of Michigan Wolverines will take on the Alabama Crimson Tide, at the ReliaQuest Bowl, in Tampa, FL, on Tuesday, December 31st at 12:00 pm (ESPN).

Special World's Cultures

Nativity Escene

Scene Of The Birth Of Christ

The Nativity Scene is the most important element of Christmas, as it displays the representation of the scene in which Jesus Christ was born.

Year after year, the Vatican City displays this scene and this year 2024 Pope Francis I showed a baby Jesus being born

on a Palestinian Kufiyah showing the clear solidarity of the Catholic Church towards the Palestinian Arab people, which, since October 8, 2023, has been incessantly massacred by the State of Israel, mainly in the territory of the Gaza Strip.

The scene of the birth of Jesus Christ usually has certain basic elements: Mary, Joseph, Jesus lying on straw and a couple of stable animals.

The scene shows Mary and Joseph in a barn because they had to wander the streets of the city of Bethlehem, 10 kilometers from the city of Jerusalem, looking for an inn where they would be given accommodation. Mary was about to give birth to Jesus the savior.

Mary and Joseph, being foreign migrants in hostile times, the people of Bethlehem were wary of receiving them in their homes. Until a very poor family with little to offer, allowed them to stay in their stable, hence the fact that at least one animal is usually added to the representation, such as a cow, a sheep, a goat or a donkey.

In some places like México a Perú, nativity scene contests are held, which include rules about the materials for their elaboration, the meters, some details that should not be left out in the narrative.

Some people shows in their Nativity Scene an entire town in aspects that highlight the artisan culture. In Latin America, Latin issues and features are included in the figurines. In other places, they include more wintery elements such as houses with snow, among other elements.

Since Latin America is a community of great artistic talent and expression, the elaboration of narratives with visual representations such as sculptural stories serve to preserve and give continuity to memory, in this case, religious stories.

The Church of the Nativity is built where Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, Palestine. For many Catholics it is one of the most important religious sites, as is the visit to Vatican City.

In times like Christmas, it is necessary to remember the importance of human lives and especially of childhood as the future of humanity.

The Palestinian Kufiyah, where Jesus rests in the Vatican Nativity, is the most important piece of clothing of Palestinian culture, containing the three most important symbols of their identity: the leaves of the olive tree, the weave of fishing nets that also represents brotherhood and fraternity among Palestinians, and the trade routes that pass through the land and navigable territory.

Since 1947, the Palestinian people have faced a series of violence inflicted against their people, first by the United Kingdom and later by State of Israel, founded by the Jews who were expelled from Europe to be relocated in the Levantine and Palestinian territory stealing and displacing Palestinians from their own houses.

The genocide that Palestinians have been facing in the Gaza Strip has ended with hundred of tens of thousands children, some of them, descendants of the very first Catholics from the world.

By, Mariana Ayón RV

Sigue cada semana en
EL CENTRAL Hispanic News
ESPECIAL CULTURAS DEL MUNDO,
by Mariana Ayón RV

ESPECIAL CULTURAS DEL MUNDO
Escena del Nacimiento

Escena del Nacimiento de Cristo y Pesebre

El nacimiento es el elemento más importante de la navidad, pues expone la representación de la escena en que nació Jesucristo.

Año tras año la Ciudad del Vaticano expone esta escena y este año 2024 el Papa Francisco I mostró un niño Jesús que nace sobre una Kufiya Palestina mostrando la clara solidaridad de la Iglesia Católica hacia el pueblo árabe palestino, el cual, desde el 8 de octubre del 2023 ha sido incesantemente masacrado por el Estado de Israel principalmente en el territorio de la Franja de Gaza.

La escena del nacimiento de Jesucristo, también llamado pesebre, suele tener ciertos elementos base: María, José, Jesús tendido sobre paja y un par de animales de establo.

A la escena se le considera el pesebre debido a que María y José tuvieron que deambular por las calles de la ciudad de Belén, 10 kilómetros de la ciudad de Jerusalén, buscando una posada dónde les dieran alojamiento. María se encontraba en a punto de dar a luz al Jesús el salvador.

María y José siendo migrantes extranjeros en tiempos hostiles, las personas sentían desconfianza de recibirlos dentro de sus casas. Hasta que una familia muy muy pobre y sin mucho qué ofrecer les permitieron quedarse en el establo, de ahí a que en la representación suela añadirse al menos un animal como una vaca, una oveja, una cabra y un burrito para carga.

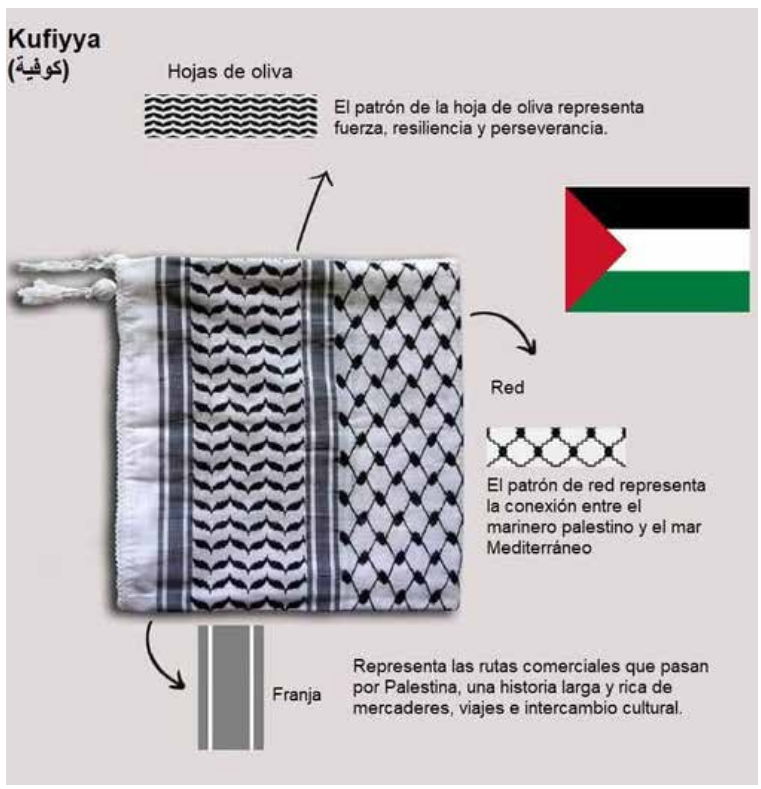
En algunos lugares se hacen concursos de nacimientos, que incluyen reglas sobre los materiales para su

no deben dejar de lado dentro de la narración. Algunos trazan el pueblo entero en aspectos que destacan la cultura artesanal. En Iberoamérica se incluyen cuestiones y rasgos latinos en las figurillas. En otros lugares, incluyen elementos más invernales como casas con nieve.

Siendo Iberoamérica una comunidad de gran expresión artística la elaboración de narrativas con representaciones visuales como son los relatos escultóricos que funcionan para preservar y dar continuidad a la memoria, en este caso, religiosa.

En épocas como la navidad es necesario recordar la importancia de la vida humana y sobre todo de las infancias como futuro de la humanidad.

La iglesia de la Natividad está construida donde nació Jesucristo en Belén, Palestina. Para muchos católicos es una de los lugares religiosos más importantes, como lo es la visita a la ciudad del vaticano.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Franja
Representa las rutas comerciales que pasan por Palestina, una historia larga y rica de mercaderes, viajes e intercambio cultural.

La Kufiya Palestina, donde reposa Jesús en el nacimiento del vaticano, es la prenda más importante de la cultura Palestina, contiene los tres símbolos más importantes de su identidad: las hojas del árbol de olivo, el tejido de las redes de pesca que también representa la fraternidad y hermandad entre los palestinos, y las rutas comerciales que pasan por el territorio terrestre y navegables.

El pueblo palestino ha enfrentado desde 1947, principalmente, a una serie de violencia infligida contra de su pueblo, primero por parte del Reino Unido y posteriormente, por parte del Estado de Israel fundado por los judíos que fueron expulsados de Europa posterior a la Segunda Guerra Mundial para ser relocalizados en el territorio de la nación Palestina, robando y desplazanvdo a miles de palestinos de sus propias casas.

El genocidio que los palestinos están enfrentando en Gaza por parte del Estado de Israel, ha sido abiertamente reprobado por el papa Francisco I.

Mariana Ayón RV

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EL CENTRAL
Hispanic News

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